



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES HELD IN ROOM 739
OF THE KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012**

Monday, March 21, 2011

10:00 AM

ROLL CALL

Present: Chair Curry, Vice Chair Friedman, Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioner Berger, Commissioner Franzen, Commissioner Kleinberg, Commissioner McClaney, Commissioner Murray, Commissioner Rudnick, Commissioner Sorkin, Commissioner Trevino-Powell and Commissioner Williams

Excused: Vice Chair Savelle, Commissioner Biondi and Commissioner Kang

1. Call to order. (11-1211)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:08 a.m.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTER

2. Introduction of March 21, 2011, meeting attendees. (11-1215)

Self introductions were made.

3. Approval of the agenda of March 21, 2011. (11-1216)

On motion of Commissioner Sorkin, seconded by Commissioner McClaney (Commissioners Biondi, Kang and Savelle being absent), the agenda for March 7, 2011, was unanimously approved.

The Chair requested that:

Item 13 (DCFS Acting Director's Report by Dr. Jackie Contreras, Chief Deputy Director) be taken after Item 5 (Chair's Report).

Item 11 (Discussion and approval of a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the DCFS Family Preservation Services Program) be taken before Item 6 (Presentation by Harvey Kawasaki, Division Chief, Youth

**Development Services, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS)
on SB 654 (Leno) and its impact on relative caregivers).**

4. Approval of the minutes of March 7, 2011. (11-1217)

The March 7, 2011 meeting minutes were approved as submitted.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

5. Report by Chair Patricia Curry for March 21, 2011. (11-1218)

Chair Curry reported the following:

- **The Commission is invited to attend the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services and the Probation Department's System Improvement Plan (SIP) meeting on March 24, 2011. Staff will forward any additional information regarding the SIP meeting to Commissioners interested in attending the event.**
- **Annual Statement of Economic Interest (Form 700) is due the first week of April 2011. Commissioners should have received an e-mail with instructions on electronic filing of Form 700, however, they may contact staff for copies of forms and schedules, and may complete them at the end of the meeting.**
- **The Women of the Year Awards Luncheon hosted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and the Commission for Women, at which Commissioner McClaney was honored, was held on Monday, March 14, 2011. The event was a success.**

Chair Curry extended special thanks to Commissioners that attended.

Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.

III. PRESENTATIONS

6. Presentation by Harvey Kawasaki, Division Chief, Youth Development Services, Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) on SB 654 (Leno) and its impact on relative caregivers. (11-1219)

Mr. Kawasaki reported the following:

- **Senate Bill 654 (SB 654) was introduced in late January 2011 early February 2011, a copy of the legislation will be sent to the Commission.**

- **SB 654 will allow non-related legal guardian youths to be able to receive Independent Living Program services (ILP).**
- **In order to qualify, youth must be between the ages of 8-15. Youth ages of 16-17, ILP funding comes from the State, all other age categories are covered by Federal funds. DCFS has identified separate codes for ILP requests, for proper coding processes. DCFS has started to receive referrals for ILP services, even though this is an unfunded mandate and does not come with additional funding.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Mr. Kawasaki added the following:

- **The Chafee ILP budget was decreased again this year by approximately \$427,000. DCFS' Emancipated Youth Services (EYS) budget was reduced by \$1.4 million; however, \$600,000 was restored.**
- **Specialized Care Incentives and Assistance Program (SCIAP) received a funding reduction; a portion of SCIAP funds is used for tutoring 14-15 year old youth. ILP's portion of SCIAP was under \$900,000, and currently at \$600,000 due to a \$300,000 cut. The current tutoring providers using SCIAP funds have enough funds to cover tutoring for all youth currently enrolled in their tutoring services.**
- **ILP services, under the Chafee budget, require that youth voluntarily participate.**
- **Non-related legal guardians have social workers; however, Kin-GAP youth do not.**

Mr. Kawasaki's report was received and filed.

- 7. Update presentation by Michael Gray, Division Chief, Kinship Support Division, DCFS, on AB 12 (Beall/Bass) California Fostering Connections to Success Act. (11-1221)**

Mr. Gray reported the following:

- **The State of California has opted into the Federal Kin-GAP Program. There are several improvements to be implemented through AB 12. One improvement is the parallel state funded program for children, which means that there will be a State and Federal funded Kin-GAP Program.**

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- All children currently in the State Program will be reviewed by DCFS to determine if they are eligible for the Federal Kin-GAP Program. DCFS representatives will meet "face to face" with each caregiver. Another enhancement is the ability of the caregiver to renegotiate their payment amounts beyond the standard Kin-GAP rate. The length of time a child has to remain in uninterrupted care under court jurisdiction was reduced from twelve months to six months. Eligibility for Federal Kin-GAP is authorized regardless of State residence.
 - 6,547 children are currently eligible for Federal Kin-GAP conversion and approximately 540 youth a month are due for a redetermination. DCFS will schedule "face to face" meetings for those caregivers in preparation for conversion to the Federal Kin-GAP Program.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Mr. Gray added the following:

- DCFS has seven social workers who will be responsible for converting 6,547 cases to the Federal Kin-GAP program on a month-to-month basis. Regulations allow for "face to face" contacts, and telephone contacts too. With current staff, 26 percent of the cases can be completed with "face to face" contact, and 30 percent can be done over the telephone. However, the remaining 44 percent would have to be absorbed using different strategies.
- The Commission expressed concern with the level of staff that DCFS has designated to complete the conversions.
- Dr. Contreras noted that DCFS has had several internal discussions on how conversions will take place and if additional resources will be needed. There have also been discussions on utilizing staff resources from the Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) Section.
- Mr. Kawasaki noted that cases of placement alone bring down the number of conversions to approximately 4,200 families. Additionally, many of the families may have siblings with open cases and the Case Carrying Social Workers of these siblings may be asked to assist with the conversions.
- The funding for 18-20 year olds, who decide to remain in placement, is contingent on the conversion of cases to the Federal Kin-GAP Program. The savings from the State to the Federal Program will fund the age extensions which will begin in 2012.

Mr. Gray's report was received and filed. The Commission requested that Mr. Gray return with an update report on the status of conversions to the Federal Kin-GAP Program at a future Commission meeting.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
[SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

- 8.** Update on the Relative Care Committee, by Harriette Williams, Committee Chair. (11-1283)

Commissioner Williams reported the following:

- **The Relative Care Committee has not been meeting on a regular basis; however she has been in contact with Mr. Gray on a monthly basis.**
- **The Kinship Coalition has also requested the help of DCFS in Service Planning Area (SPA) six, specifically regarding the leases of two support centers for relative caregivers.**
- **The Committee is concerned with the progress for relative caregivers who continue to need Respite Care and Childcare. Little has been done in the last twelve years.**
- **Chair Curry recommended that the Relative Care Committee send a report to the Board regarding their concerns for relative caregivers.**

Commissioner Williams report was received and filed.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

- 9.** Discussion and approval of a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding Mayor Antonovich's motion, Agenda No. 6 of March 8, 2011 (Strengthening Child Protection through County Department Cluster Reconfiguration).

- Chair (11-1333)

On motion of Commissioner Rudnick, seconded by Commissioner Berger, unanimously carried (Commissioners Biondi, Kang, and Savelle being absent), this item was approved as submitted.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

10. Discussion and approval to co-sponsor the Disconnected and Underserved: Improving Education for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System event, hosted by the Educational Funders Group to be held at the Public Counsel Law Center (Los Angeles), on March 31, 2011.

- Carol Biondi (11-1300)

On motion of Commissioner Williams, seconded by Commissioner McClaney, unanimously carried (Commissioners Biondi, Kang, Murray, Savelle and Sorkin being absent), this item was approved. The Commission agreed to appoint Commissioner Kleinberg to represent the Commission.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

11. Discussion and approval of a letter to the Board of Supervisors regarding the DCFS Family Preservation Services Program.

- Adelina Sorkin

During discussion, on recommendation of the Commission and County Counsel grammatical and substantive changes were made to the letter as follows:

Page 1 Paragraph 1

We are writing to you ~~requesting~~ **recommending** that the Chief Executive Office (CEO) and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) evaluate the outcomes for Family Preservation (FP) contracts and services.

Page 1 Paragraph 2

What was striking in the two presentations was the contrast between the independent evaluation with very positive outcomes for children resulting from the PIDP services and the ~~complete~~ lack of any evaluation or outcomes study on the FP contracts. Despite the millions of dollars spent on FP over the years, there have only been two formal evaluations of this program since FP began in 1992. One evaluation was conducted in 2000 and the other in 2005. ~~Following the year~~ **After the** 2000 evaluation conducted by Dr. Barbara Solomon, the Commission with the concurrence of DCFS, recommended to your Board that there was a need for an ongoing evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of the program. The ~~then~~ Director of DCFS ~~at that time~~ assured your Board and the Commission that quarterly evaluative reports would be implemented. However, no formal evaluations have been conducted since 2005.

Page 2, Bullets two, four and six

Determine whether families receiving FP services experience a higher rate of “permanency exits” than those families who do not receive FP services.

Compare the outcomes and cost effectiveness of PIDP and FP in order to determine what future funding should be invested in each program. ~~At the Commission meeting it~~ **It** was reported **to the Commission** that \$37 million is spent annually on FP of which \$11million is from the Title IV-E Waiver reinvestment dollars (an increase from Fiscal Year 2009/10). PIDP on the other hand is funded at a fraction of this **amount**.

Determine which **FP** agencies are having successful outcomes and which ~~ones do are~~ **not, and consider cutting the funding to those that do not.**

Page 2, Last Paragraph

The Commission has had a long history of involvement in FP **since beginning** two decades ago when the legendary child advocate, Nancy Daly, traveled to Washington, D.C. to ensure the passage of FP legislation, and that Los Angeles County would ~~show the lead~~ **way** in the use of these dollars. The Commission, under ~~her leadership~~ **Commissioner Daly’s recommendation,** worked closely with DCFS in implementing these programs. The Commission strongly believes that without an evaluation process, we will not know what programs are effective and whether these programs continue to work under the Guiding Principles that include Child Health and Safety, Strong Families, and Strong Communities.

Page 3, recommendations one, four, and five

1. The CEO and DCFS ~~conduct~~ **ensure that there is** an independent evaluation of the FP programs, services, and contracts, before the end of 2011, and prior to renewing the existing contracts.
4. DCFS review the “re-entry” rate and **the rate of** “permanency exits” of both PIDP and FP Programs.
5. Funding for programs be based on outcome and effectiveness of the programs **and services.** (11-1272)

On motion of Commissioner Kleinberg, seconded by Commissioner Berger, unanimously carried (Commissioners Biondi, Kang, and Savelle being absent), this item was approved as amended.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

- 12.** Discussion on AB 73 (Feuer) Dependency proceedings “public access,” and approval of a letter to the Honorable Mike Feuer, Assemblymember, 42nd Assembly District, in support of AB 73.

- Susan F. Friedman
- Helen A. Kleinberg (11-1270)

After discussion, on motion of Commissioner Friedman, seconded by Vice Chair Olivas, and unanimously carried (Commissioners Biondi, Kang, Murray, Savelle and Sorkin being absent), this item was continued to the meeting of April 4, 2011. Vice Chair Olivas recommended waiting until the final language of the Bill is released by the Assemblymember Feuer to revise the letter to better position the Commission’s support.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
 [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

- 13.** DCFS Acting Director’s Report by Dr. Jackie Contreras, Chief Deputy Director, DCFS.

Dr. Jackie Contreras reported the following:

- **A decision has not been reached for the hiring of a new Director of DCFS, however a decision is imminent.**
- **DCFS has had significant internal discussions and would like to expand the discussion externally regarding the Title IV-E Waiver (Waiver) and what potential resources DCFS has to continue to reinvestment in the Waiver. DCFS is reviewing the overarching outcomes such as: The number of kids in care; how much time kids are spending in care; how quickly are kids being reunified; and the breakdown of outcomes by program.**
- **A number of discussions on Family Preservation have taken place. Although no formal evaluation have been prepared; the Department does have a significant amount of data and is trying to breakdown that data to see what the Department can conclude based on strategy.**

- **DCFS management changes include:**
 - **Joi Russell is retiring at the end of the month; Diane Wagner will provide coverage for Services Bureau I.**
 - **Lisa Parrish is leaving the Department; Rhelda Shabazz will provide coverage for the Bureau of Strategic Management.**
 - **Norma Doctor Sparks has left the Department; Dawna Yokoyama will provide coverage for Services Bureau IV.**
- **Exam bulletins for these positions have been posted. However, no decisions on these positions will be made until a new DCFS Director is hired.**
- **To date, the number of Emergency Response cases over sixty days are at 2,158.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Dr. Contreras added the following:

- **DCFS will review available data regarding visitation between siblings under the care of DCFS. If DCFS does not have the data, a review will be conducted to determine how to best collect this information. However, DCFS data on visitations between Children's Social Workers' (CSW) and the parents is available.**
- **DCFS will take into consideration the "re-entry" rate when discussing the Waiver, and the use of nurses in conducting health assessments.**
- **A meeting will be coordinated with the Relative Caregiver Committee and the Kinship Coalition.**

Dr. Contreras' verbal report was received and filed. (11-1234)

V. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

- 14. Items not posted on the agenda, to be presented and (if requested) referred to staff or placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission.**

There were none.

Announcements

15. Announcements for the meeting of March 21, 2011. (11-1237)

There were none.

Public Comment

16. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (11-1236)

Sarah Doakes, Grandparents as Parent, addressed the Commission regarding her interest in participating in the Relative Care Committee meeting with Dr. Jackie Contreras.

Adjournment

17. Adjournment for the meeting of March 21, 2011. (11-1284)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:48 p.m.